

COLLOQUIES with Pastor Brian

What Do You Think?

Matthew 21:28-32

²⁸ 'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today."²⁹ He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

This Sunday, if we get our act together, you will hear a sermon sharing why Moses leading the Israelites out of the desert is like Jesus talking about belief in God's kingdom. Today, I want to share more mundane thoughts.

Primarily, I ask that we concentrate on just the passage of Matthew 21:28-32. And here's my question: Where have you had a child tell you they'd do something and they didn't do it or a child say they wouldn't and then they did? Its a real question. Please, if you are reading this and you have seen this type of behavior, would you mind contacting me and letting me know? Because with the pandemic and homeschooling, THIS STORY IS OUR LIVES!

We have more than just two sons, of course, but I need both my fingers AND my toes to count how many times a child promises me they will do something and then they don't follow through. On the other hand, I have some children who will protest loudly and often about something I asked them to do and I quit, exasperated only to find out their guilt (or another child leaning on them) has made them go and do the thing I asked them to do. And yet, here is the really strange thing.

Jesus' version of this story LIFTS UP the story of the first son, the one who did the will of the father but had said they would not, and then compares them to prostitutes and tax collectors. Anyone else uncomfortable with this story? Let me ask you another way, which of your children is the prostitute or which one works for the IRS?

I know, right? And I have a bigger challenge. Can I admit to you that some part of me wants to be lied to? When one of our kids fights us tooth and nail to not cooperate with what we are asking or need, it takes all the joy out of a situation. Later, even if they do what we asked, we often find ourselves unhappy still because of how hard it was to convince them to participate. On the other hand, when we are lied to (I hope unintentionally, but still...) by a child promising to do something but then 'forgetting', we are usually disappointed, but a lot less exhausted or frustrated. It depends how many times we have to ask, of course.



What Do You Think?

So this week and before filming Thursday or preaching Sunday, I have to figure out what Jesus means by all of this. What do you think?

Again, please let me know what you have observed in your own homes. I don't have a moral or teaching yet. I'm just perplexed. I hope God's own instruction to you in your living and learning might help me see this in new light. Here's hoping to hear from you! My contact information is below.

With appreciation,

Rev. Brian

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“Forgiveness is at the very heart of the Christian journey!”

— Pastor Brian